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137 241 [248] kobo (Musa ensete) is grown. This is used for making ropes of all kinds and bags for grain. In the south, the roots and inner parts of the plant are also used to make flour for 264 [186] food; but the Amhara despise this, considering it "food of slave peoples".

137 Vegetation is dense in the valleys, and the forests contain many valuable trees, including the Natal yellow pine. But in spite of the high yearly rainfall the northern plateau is comparatively little wooded. Foresters estimate that only 2.8% of Ethiopia is forest-covered, although they believe that it was once well forested. They ascribe this denuding to centuries of uncontrolled grazing and periodic burning-over. The best hardwoods that remain are usually in the least accessible spots, lowlands and gorges.[7]

137 313 The two most important trees of the highlands are the Tod and the Zecba. The Tod, a juniper (Juniperus procera) sometimes referred to as "pencil cedar" (or Juniperus phoenicoea), is fine-grained, easy to split, aromatic, durable (even when exposed to moist conditions in the rainy season), and termite-resistant. It is popular for beams in the better houses of chiefs, and for the simple native furniture. The Zegba(Podocarpus gracilor), also an evergreen, is found in the warmer parts of the plateau. The wood is soft, easy to split, subject to decay when exposed to moisture, and thus more popular in drier areas. Non-resinous and tasteless, it is useful as a container for food, but is mainly used for construction and furniture. On the higher plateau

7. Chamber of Commerce of Addis Ababa: Guidebook of Ethiopia 1954, pp. 127-8; Auc: Ethiopia, 1955, p.1-2; Simmons:Global Epidemiology, 1951, p.63.

137 areas, the wild olive, wäyra, is preferred, because it is
●313 available, a hardwood, yet not difficult to split. Ease of splitting is always a most important consideration because of the population's simple tools and disinclination to expend effort to change what nature provides. Another olive, the wanza (Cordia abyssinica, a coarsely porous light wood), is popular for smoking out beer jars and other pottery before and after use. The yellow, cherry-like olive is one of the available wild fruit trees.

On lower levels of plateau elevation, the acacia known as grar is found in many varieties, often as the "umbrella tree". Generally the wood is hard, used in construction, and even more popular as fuel, especially as charcoal for firing pottery. Lowland trees include the termite-resistant Natal yellow pine, the giant sycamore, mimosa(also called grar), gum trees, lemon, and a small size banana.

137 One of the most popular trees, especially in the larger
324 centers of population on the plateau, was imported by Em-
177 peror Menelik II about half a century ago: the odoriferous, water-holding eucalyptus, called bahēr zaf (lit. the tree from overseas). Although there are no real forests of it, it is the most noticeable tree in Ethiopia, planted around houses, in wooded clumps between urban sections, towering above the native plateau trees. It grows so fast that in some areas it can be "harvested", primarily for construction purposes, after only five years.

137 A common sight on lower slopes is the euphorbia, qul-
-78 qual, which resembles an immense, spiny chandelier with
124 multiple branches. Its milky sap is used in some native

824 461 searching for suitably shaped hard or soft saplings and other woods and certain herbs, than perform carpentry or much transplanting. Apart from saddle-making, the alga-bed, and simple musical instruments, one can hardly speak of any carpentry.

824 313 In preparation for housebuilding and other activities connected with lumbering, the timber provided by nature is divided, in the Amhara view, into two major categories: Male, i.e. hard wood or strong wood; Female or soft, less consistent, or easily pliable woods. Heaviness or lightness are not major categories (as in western countries).

Male woods ("wandē enchāt") and their uses include the following:

Wild Olive Tree ("wāyra") (olea chrysophylla), one of the hardest; often heavy and massive, found on the edge of forests, brown-black in color, quite oily. Used for construction on plateau, e.g. as saplings for walls, rafters, etc. The small twigs are in common use as "toothbrushes". They are chewed and used to clean teeth and polish gums, as a leisure-time activity after meals. [515]

"Wanza" (Cordia abyssinica), a light but hard wood which is found very commonly and is therefore popular; used to make the yokes of oxen, saddles, low, round chairs and other equipment that takes much punishment in use, such as riflestocks when the original has broken.

"Gulleffa" (Dombeya Bruceana), very hard, used for clubs, e.g. as pestle in the women's crushing of barley.

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"Balla", after weeks of searching, a strong tree trunk is selected, after weeks of searching, to serve as center post for the new tuqul.

"Tequr enchät" (Pygeum Africanum), actually light red (lit. black wood), a porous hardwood, commonly available, which seasons well.

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Rosewood, "Kosso" (Brayera anthelmintica) the search for which is a major occupation and livelihood of poor widows, since the bark and twigs are consumed against tapeworm. It is a heavy wood which can take a fine polish, thus more commonly used in noble homes. It is commonly available, at edge of "dega" upland forest.

"qarqaha", a bamboo of river valleys, can grow up to 5" in diameter, commonly used as major posts in tents of feudal lords during their military campaigns.

"yäwäraha shemäl" (bambusa abyssinica), lit. "bamboo of the jungle", a strong bamboo from the qolla lowland, traded from there in former times to serve as a staff for the spear; now used by shepherds as staff, and to fend off dogs, also for some simple furniture.

[778] Male wood is also called "täbot enchät" because hardwood is used to make the tabot, the sacred tablet inscribed with the name of a church, placed in the inner sanctum, symbolizing the Ark of Moses in the Holy of Holies in Jerusalem.

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824 313 Female woods ("enest enchat") are preferred and much more used than hardwoods, if the purposes permit, because they are more easily worked:

"Ted" (Juniperus Procera), or (Juniperus Phoenicoea) pencil cedar, is popular as a tall conifer, easy to split, moisture-resistent in rainy season, termite-resistent. It is one of the most important woods, and the only one of the traditional woods that is actually planted and protected by cut thornbushes against goats (which like to feed on the nursling). The grown tree resembles the cypress, and is the landmark of churches, churchyards and church schools. Thus the tree assumes a kind of sacredness, perhaps since pre-Christian times. In the tuqul it is often used as the horizontal, transversal beam. [778]

"Zigba" (Podocarpus elongata, or, Podocarpus gracilor) is a tall conifer of similar properties, with stringy, tough wood, used to make the alga bedsteads and other furniture.

"Ketketta" (Dodonea viscosa) is used for small carpentry, walking sticks; due to its slightly resinous but long-lasting qualities for torch parade at Masqal or wedding festivities. The leaves have household uses. [313]

"Kwara" (Erytrina tomentosa), used for slats in simple carpentry.

824 313 417 "Kenchub" bush, which resembles the euphorbia but grows at higher altitudes and is tougher, is cut and

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placed on the outside of garden or hamlet-fences, to discourage hyenas, to keep livestock inside -- a natural barbed wire.

Eucalyptus tree ("bahər zaf") has become thoroughly rooted in Ethiopia. It is used in construction, especially of the more urban dwellings, as urban fuel, and its blue smoke and aroma is an early morning and evening feature of every town and market-town, where it is a major trade item. During the rainy season it grows so fast that a mature tree can be "harvested" 5 years after the nursling stage. Since it sells for $3-5 Ethiopian, (US $1-2) it is the most planted tree in Ethiopia today. The peasant also likes to use the odoriferous branches and leaves to cover the "dass" the festivity-shelter on marriages, etc., and the leafy branch as chera, flyswitch. Entire hillsides may be seen planted with this tree.

Female woods are also used for other indispensable products:

[386] Ink - is made from the fruit of the "tämbälal" (Jasminum floribundum) tree, and its timer is used

[534] for the stock of the single-string violin, the masenqo. (But imported blue ink called "nil" is preferred by däbtära scribes.)

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283 Fibre - for basketry, roof-hoops, etc. is obtained from the "wärqe" (musa ensete) (also called "enset") at lower altitudes, used especially for cords. Rope "gämäd" is made from the bark cut